

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1-51 are pending in this Office Action.

Drawings

2. The filed drawings on 10/20/2008 is accepted.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

3. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Attorney Michele V. Frank & Matthew J. Laskoski on 10/22/2008.

In claims:

Please replace claims 1, 10 -12, 15-17, 19, 21, 41 and 46 with amended claims 1, 10 -12, 15-17, 19, 21, 41 and 46.

Please cancel claims 14, 24-40, and 48-51.

1. (Currently Amended) A communications management network system for managing a public involvement project with a front end including a concurrent public feedback loop, the system comprising:

a server computer connected to a network;

a front end secure web portal to remotely access the server computer over the network for providing information regarding the public involvement project to public users at public-at-large and receiving a large number of public comment inputs regarding the public involvement project from the public users at the public-at-large;

a backend for project team members managing the public involvement project to access the server computer, wherein the backend includes an integration and collaboration of public feedback and the backend is suitable for managing one or more public involvement projects;

a communications manager application for receiving the large number of public comment inputs from the public users at the public-at-large and handling the large number of public comment inputs from the public users at the public-at-large for access by the project team members to use and respond to the large number of public comment inputs from the public users at the public-at-large regarding the public involvement project, wherein the communications manager application comprises:

an information module for welcoming a user and referencing permission level access, wherein the information module further comprises a project overview, project news and project status;

a project team tools module for coordinating and informing team members, wherein the project team tools module further comprises a task manager, calendar, team access management, team communications and image manager, and

a communications tools module for facilitating information transfer, wherein the communications tools module further comprises one or more message boards and web conferencing;

wherein the communications manager application further supports Web site maintenance by one or more of updating dynamic text areas, creating Web sites by using templates, handling multiple Web sites by using customizations of at least one shared feature, providing a separate address linked to a Web site for accepting the large number of public comment inputs, providing a separate address for accepting comments, providing automatic font and color adjustments, and supporting substantially unlimited number of active pages;

wherein the server computer provides access, following authentication, by the public users and the project team members to one or more of the information module, the project team tools module, the communications tools module, a site management tools module, and modules for:

searching the large number of public comment inputs; organizing the large number of public comment inputs;

analyzing public comment inputs at the backend;

publishing the analyzed public comment inputs from the backend to enable the concurrent public feedback loop;

generating one or more reports by integrating the large number of public comment inputs or large number of searched public comment inputs; and

creating a modified rule based upon the analyzing and handling the large number of public comment inputs regarding the public involvement project, if the modified rule is not final , then questions are posted to invite further comments.

7. (Currently amended) The system of claim 1, wherein the communications tools module provides one or more of web conferencing and message board.

10. (Currently amended) The system of claim 1, wherein the site management tools module includes screening public submission to identify presence of inappropriate subject matter.

Art Unit: 2169

11. (Currently amended) The system of claim 10, wherein the identified presence of inappropriate subject matter is sequestered for detailed review.

12. (Currently amended) The system of claim 1, wherein the project team tools module includes searching for public submissions in accordance with one or more of a keyword, a time of submission, an identifier, an idea, a theme and a vision.

15. (Currently amended) The system of claim 1, wherein work product is published on a Website concurrently with a generation to invite comments to complete a feedback loop.

16. (Currently amended) The system of claim 1, wherein the communications manager application accepts one or more of a public agency, a quasi public agency and an enterprise to manage the large number of public comment inputs, manage comments from a select audience, support one or more teams of consultants, agency staff, stakeholder organizations relevant to one or more public involvement projects at a same time.

17. (Currently amended) The system of claim 1, wherein the communications manager application provides one or more of a public agency, a quasi public agency, an

Art Unit: 2169

enterprise electronic project management with work-flow, document and image management, content management, Web-site management, and reporting technologies.

19. (Currently amended) The system of claim 18, wherein the plurality of access levels include User Manager for adding and assigning users to projects, Project Manager for creating new projects and having full access to a communications management module, and Team Member for having access to a limited number of modules with read/update privileges.

21. (Currently amended) The system of claim 20, wherein the communications manager application access the public website maintenance interface via a project site maintenance interface.

41. (Currently amended) A computer-implemented method of managing a public involvement project with a front end including a concurrent public feedback loop and a backend including an integration and collaboration of public feedback, the method comprising:

providing access over a network, via a front end secure web portal, to a server computer operatively connected to the network;

providing information regarding the public involvement project to public users at public-at-large and receiving a large number of public comment inputs regarding the public involvement project from the public users at the public-at-large;

managing, by project team members, via the backend, the public involvement project to access the server computer, wherein the backend is suitable for managing one or more public involvement projects;

receiving, via a communications manager application, the large number of public comment inputs regarding the public involvement project from the public users at the public-at-large,

handling the large number of public comment inputs from the public users at the public-at-large, wherein the handling includes responding, by the project team members, to the large number of public comment inputs from the public users at the public-at-large regarding the public involvement project;

searching the large number of public comment inputs; organizing the large number of public comment inputs;

analyzing public comment inputs at the backend;

publishing the analyzed public comment inputs from the backend to enable the concurrent public feedback loop;

generating one or more reports by integrating the large number of public comment inputs or large number of searched public comment inputs;

creating a modified rule based upon the analyzing and handling the large number of public comment input regarding the public involvement project, if the modified rule is not final, then questions are posted to invite further comments;

wherein the generating, analyzing, publishing and the creating are executed by using the communications manager application, wherein the communications manager application comprises:

an information module for welcoming a user and referencing permission level access, wherein the information module further comprises a project overview, project news and project status,

a project team tools module for coordinating and informing team members, wherein the project team tools module further comprises a task manager, calendar, team access management, team communications and image manager, and

a communications tools module for facilitating information transfer, wherein the communications tools module further comprises one or more message boards and web conferencing;

wherein the communications manager application further supports Web site maintenance by one or more of updating dynamic text areas, creating

Art Unit: 2169

Web sites by using templates, handling multiple Web sites by using customizations of at least one shared feature, providing a separate address linked to a Web site for accepting the large number of public comment inputs, providing a separate address for accepting comments, providing automatic font and color adjustments, and supporting substantially unlimited number of active pages;

accessing, following authentication, by the public users and the project team members, to the information module, the project team tools module, the communications tools module, and a site management tools module.

46. (Currently amended) The method of claim 41, wherein the communications tools module further comprises web conferencing and one or more message boards.

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claims 1-13, 15-23, 41-47 are allowed.

The prior arts of record alone or in combination, does not teach or fairly suggest combination of steps as recited in independent claim 1, wherein:

a communications manager application for receiving the large number of public comment inputs from the public users at the public-at-large and handling the large number of public comment inputs from the public users at the public-at-large for access by the project team members to use and respond to the large number of public comment inputs from the public users at the public-at-large regarding the public involvement project, wherein the communications manager application further supports Web site maintenance by one or more of updating dynamic text areas, creating Web sites by using templates, handling multiple Web sites by using customizations of at least one shared feature, providing a separate address linked to a Web site for accepting the large number of public comment inputs, providing a separate address for accepting comments, providing automatic font and color adjustments, and supporting substantially unlimited number of active pages; wherein the server computer provides access, following authentication, by the public users and the project team members to one or more of the information module, the project team tools module, the communications tools module, a site management tools module, and modules for: publishing the analyzed public comment inputs from the backend to enable the concurrent public feedback loop; generating one or more reports by integrating the large number of public

comment inputs or large number of searched public comment inputs; and creating a modified rule based upon the analyzing and handling the large number of public comment inputs regarding the public involvement project, if the modified rule is not final, then questions are posted to invite further comments” and

The prior arts of record alone or in combination, does not teach or fairly suggest combination of steps as recited in independent claim 41, wherein “handling the large number of public comment inputs from the public users at the public-at-large, wherein the handling includes responding, by the project team members, to the large number of public comment inputs from the public users at the public-at-large regarding the public involvement project; analyzing public comment inputs at the backend; publishing the analyzed public comment inputs from the backend to enable the concurrent public feedback loop; generating one or more reports by integrating the large number of public comment inputs or large number of searched public comment inputs; creating a modified rule based upon the analyzing and handling the large number of public comment input regarding the public involvement project, if the modified rule is not final, then questions are posted to invite further comments; wherein the generating, analyzing, publishing and the creating are executed by using the communications manager application, wherein the communications manager application further supports Web site maintenance by one or more of updating dynamic text areas, creating Web sites by using templates, handling multiple Web sites by using customizations of at least one shared feature, providing a separate address linked to a Web site for accepting the large number of public comment inputs, providing a separate address for accepting

Art Unit: 2169

comments, providing automatic font and color adjustments, and supporting substantially unlimited number of active pages”.

The dependent claims, bring definite, further limiting, and fully enabled by the specification are also allowed.

Contact Information

4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Cam Y T. Truong whose telephone number is (571) 272-4042. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tony Mahmoudi can be reached on (571) 272-4078. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Cam Y Truong/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2169